

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

CASE NO.: 23-CV- 61437

WINNIFRED FERGUSON and
DARRON FERGUSON,

Plaintiffs,

v.

RONALD DESANTIS, Governor of Florida and
KILOLO KIJAKAZI, Acting Commissioner of
Social Security.

Defendants.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL

Kilolo Kijakazi, Acting Commissioner of Social Security, by and through the undersigned Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, hereby files this Notice of Removal pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1442(a)(1), 1446(a) and states the following:

1. On July 3, 2023, Winnifred Ferguson and Darron Ferguson (collectively “Plaintiffs”) filed the complaint in the Circuit Court of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit, in and for Broward County, Florida, styled as *Winnifred Ferguson and Darron Ferguson v. Ronald DeSantis, Governor of Florida and Kilolo Kijakazi, Acting Commissioner of Social Security*; Case No. CACE-23-015302 (the “State Court Action”).

2. A copy of the complaint filed against the federal officer is attached as Exhibit A and made a part of this Notice.¹

¹ The Complaint filed in the State Court Action includes Plaintiffs’ personal identifying information (“PII”). The undersigned has redacted the PII from the original complaint.

3. On July 13, 2023, a summons was issued for Kilolo Kijakazi, Acting Commissioner of Social Security. *See* Exhibit B. No summons was issued for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida or the U.S. Attorney General.

4. Plaintiffs have not effectuated service upon the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida or the U.S. Attorney General.

5. Defendant Kilolo Kijakazi, Acting Commissioner of Social Security is an officer of the United States.

6. Broward County is within the Southern District of Florida.

7. Plaintiffs' complaint possibly seeks a determination from the Florida Circuit Court against an officer of the United States.²

8. This Court has removal jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1442(a)(1) as the civil action commenced in the Circuit Court in and for Broward County, Florida is based upon an action against an officer of the United States Government. The State Court Action is premised upon Plaintiffs' allegations that either Ronald DeSantis or the Social Security Administration committed fraud against the Plaintiffs.

9. Upon removal of this action to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, notice shall be filed by the United States with the Circuit Court, in and for Broward County, Florida, notifying the Circuit Court of the removal and that their case should be administratively closed in favor of the federal court case.

10. The United States has included the above-referenced pleadings, process, orders, and other documents filed in the State Court Action as attachments to this notice. United States of

² The Plaintiffs' complaint as currently stated is difficult to comprehend. However, it seems Plaintiffs are alleging that the Social Security Administration committed fraud. "*Pro se* pleadings are held to a less stringent standard than pleadings drafted by attorneys and will, therefore, be liberally construed." *Henley v. Payne*, 945 F.3d 1320, 1327 (11th Cir. 2019) (citation omitted).

America also includes a copy of the State Court Action docket sheet. *See* Exhibit C. The docket sheet reflects additional documents and filings from Plaintiffs. All filings in the State Court Action are attached as Exhibit D.

11. This Notice is signed pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 11.

WHEREFORE, Kilolo Kijakazi, Acting Commissioner of Social Security, respectfully requests the Court to remove this action from the Circuit Court in and for Broward County, Florida, to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida.

Dated July 27, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

MARKENZY LAPOINTE
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

BY: Felipe Plechac-Diaz
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Counsel for United States of America

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on July 27, 2023, I electronically filed the foregoing document with the Clerk of the Court using CM/ECF. I further certify that the foregoing document is being served this day by USPS First Class Mail on the following parties:

Winnifred Ferguson
3775 N.W. 107 Terrace
Sunrise, FL 33351

Darron Ferguson
3775 N.W. 107 Terrace

Sunrise, FL 33351

Ronald DeSantis, Governor of Florida
Office of Governor Ron DeSantis
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.) **NOTICE: Attorneys MUST Indicate All Re-filed Cases Below.**

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS

DEFENDANTS

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant
(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)

Attorneys (If Known)

(d) Check County Where Action Arose: ☐ MIAMI-DADE ☐ MONROE ☐ BROWARD ☐ PALM BEACH ☐ MARTIN ☐ ST. LUCIE ☐ INDIAN RIVER ☐ OKEECHOBEE ☐ HIGHLANDS

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff
- ☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant
- ☐ 3 Federal Question
(U.S. Government Not a Party)
- ☐ 4 Diversity
(Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

- PTF DEF
- ☐ Citizen of This State ☐ 1 ☐ 1 Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State ☐ 4 ☐ 4
- ☐ Citizen of Another State ☐ 2 ☐ 2 Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State ☐ 5 ☐ 5
- Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country ☐ 3 ☐ 3 Foreign Nation ☐ 6 ☐ 6

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

Click here for: [Nature of Suit Code Descriptions](#)

CONTRACT	TORTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES
<input type="checkbox"/> 110 Insurance	PERSONAL INJURY	<input type="checkbox"/> 625 Drug Related Seizure	<input type="checkbox"/> 422 Appeal 28 USC 158	<input type="checkbox"/> 375 False Claims Act
<input type="checkbox"/> 120 Marine	<input type="checkbox"/> 310 Airplane	<input type="checkbox"/> of Property 21 USC 881	<input type="checkbox"/> 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157	<input type="checkbox"/> 376 Qui Tam (31 USC 3729(a))
<input type="checkbox"/> 130 Miller Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 315 Airplane Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 690 Other		<input type="checkbox"/> 400 State Reapportionment
<input type="checkbox"/> 140 Negotiable Instrument	<input type="checkbox"/> 320 Assault, Libel & Slander		INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS	<input type="checkbox"/> 410 Antitrust
<input type="checkbox"/> 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment	<input type="checkbox"/> 330 Federal Employers' Liability		<input type="checkbox"/> 820 Copyrights	<input type="checkbox"/> 430 Banks and Banking
<input type="checkbox"/> 151 Medicare Act			<input type="checkbox"/> 830 Patent	<input type="checkbox"/> 450 Commerce
<input type="checkbox"/> 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans	<input type="checkbox"/> 340 Marine		<input type="checkbox"/> 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application	<input type="checkbox"/> 460 Deportation
(Excl. Veterans)			<input type="checkbox"/> 840 Trademark	<input type="checkbox"/> 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations
<input type="checkbox"/> 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> 345 Marine Product Liability		<input type="checkbox"/> 880 Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016	<input type="checkbox"/> 480 Consumer Credit (15 USC 1681 or 1692)
<input type="checkbox"/> 160 Stockholders' Suits	<input type="checkbox"/> 350 Motor Vehicle	LABOR	SOCIAL SECURITY	<input type="checkbox"/> 485 Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA)
<input type="checkbox"/> 190 Other Contract	<input type="checkbox"/> 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 710 Fair Labor Standards Acts	<input type="checkbox"/> 861 HIA (1395ff)	<input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV
<input type="checkbox"/> 195 Contract Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 360 Other Personal Injury	<input type="checkbox"/> 720 Labor/Mgmt. Relations	<input type="checkbox"/> 862 Black Lung (923)	<input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV
<input type="checkbox"/> 196 Franchise	<input type="checkbox"/> 362 Personal Injury - Med. Malpractice	<input type="checkbox"/> 740 Railway Labor Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g))	<input type="checkbox"/> 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange
		<input type="checkbox"/> 751 Family and Medical Leave Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 864 SSID Title XVI	<input type="checkbox"/> 890 Other Statutory Actions
		<input type="checkbox"/> 790 Other Labor Litigation	<input type="checkbox"/> 865 RSI (405(g))	<input type="checkbox"/> 891 Agricultural Acts
		<input type="checkbox"/> 791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act		<input type="checkbox"/> 893 Environmental Matters
REAL PROPERTY	CIVIL RIGHTS	PRISONER PETITIONS	FEDERAL TAX SUITS	<input type="checkbox"/> 895 Freedom of Information Act
<input type="checkbox"/> 210 Land Condemnation	<input type="checkbox"/> 440 Other Civil Rights	Habeas Corpus:	<input type="checkbox"/> 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant)	<input type="checkbox"/> 896 Arbitration
<input type="checkbox"/> 220 Foreclosure	<input type="checkbox"/> 441 Voting	<input type="checkbox"/> 463 Alien Detainee	<input type="checkbox"/> 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	<input type="checkbox"/> 899 Administrative Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of Agency Decision
<input type="checkbox"/> 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment	<input type="checkbox"/> 442 Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence		<input type="checkbox"/> 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes
<input type="checkbox"/> 240 Torts to Land	<input type="checkbox"/> 443 Housing/Accommodations	<input type="checkbox"/> 530 General		
<input type="checkbox"/> 245 Tort Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> 535 Death Penalty	IMMIGRATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 290 All Other Real Property	<input type="checkbox"/> 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> 462 Naturalization Application	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 448 Education	<input type="checkbox"/> 540 Mandamus & Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 465 Other Immigration Actions	
		<input type="checkbox"/> 550 Civil Rights		
		<input type="checkbox"/> 555 Prison Condition		
		<input type="checkbox"/> 560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of Confinement		

V. ORIGIN

(Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☐ 1 Original Proceeding ☐ 2 Removed from State Court ☐ 3 Re-filed (See VI below) ☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened ☐ 5 Transferred from another district (specify) ☐ 6 Multidistrict Litigation Transfer ☐ 7 Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment ☐ 8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File ☐ 9 Remanded from Appellate Court

VI. RELATED/ RE-FILED CASE(S)

(See instructions): a) Re-filed Case ☐ YES ☐ NO

b) Related Cases ☐ YES ☐ NO

JUDGE:

DOCKET NUMBER:

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing and Write a Brief Statement of Cause (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):

VII. CAUSE OF ACTION

LENGTH OF TRIAL via _____ days estimated (for both sides to try entire case)

VIII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:

☐ CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER F.R.C.P. 23

DEMAND \$

CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:

JURY DEMAND: ☐ Yes ☐ No

ABOVE INFORMATION IS TRUE & CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE

DATE

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET FORM JS 44**Authority For Civil Cover Sheet**

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and service of pleading or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. The attorney filing a case should complete the form as follows:

I. (a) Plaintiffs-Defendants. Enter names (last, first, middle initial) of plaintiff and defendant. If the plaintiff or defendant is a government agency, use only the full name or standard abbreviations. If the plaintiff or defendant is an official within a government agency, identify first the agency and then the official, giving both name and title.

(b) County of Residence. For each civil case filed, except U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county where the first listed plaintiff resides at the time of filing. In U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county in which the first listed defendant resides at the time of filing. (NOTE: In land condemnation cases, the county of residence of the "defendant" is the location of the tract of land involved.)

(c) Attorneys. Enter the firm name, address, telephone number, and attorney of record. If there are several attorneys, list them on an attachment, noting in this section "(see attachment)".

II. Jurisdiction. The basis of jurisdiction is set forth under Rule 8(a), F.R.C.P., which requires that jurisdictions be shown in pleadings. Place an "X" in one of the boxes. If there is more than one basis of jurisdiction, precedence is given in the order shown below.

United States plaintiff. (1) Jurisdiction based on 28 U.S.C. 1345 and 1348. Suits by agencies and officers of the United States are included here.

United States defendant. (2) When the plaintiff is suing the United States, its officers or agencies, place an "X" in this box.

Federal question. (3) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1331, where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution of the United States, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States. In cases where the U.S. is a party, the U.S. plaintiff or defendant code takes precedence, and box 1 or 2 should be marked. Diversity of citizenship. (4) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1332, where parties are citizens of different states. When Box 4 is checked, the citizenship of the different parties must be checked. (See Section III below; federal question actions take precedence over diversity cases.)

III. Residence (citizenship) of Principal Parties. This section of the JS 44 is to be completed if diversity of citizenship was indicated above. Mark this section for each principal party.

IV. Nature of Suit. Nature of Suit. Place an "X" in the appropriate box. If there are multiple nature of suit codes associated with the case, pick the nature of suit code that is most applicable. Click here for: [Nature of Suit Code Descriptions](#).

V. Origin. Place an "X" in one of the seven boxes.

Original Proceedings. (1) Cases which originate in the United States district courts.

Removed from State Court. (2) Proceedings initiated in state courts may be removed to the district courts under Title 28 U.S.C., Section 1441. When the petition for removal is granted, check this box.

Refiled (3) Attach copy of Order for Dismissal of Previous case. Also complete VI.

Reinstated or Reopened. (4) Check this box for cases reinstated or reopened in the district court. Use the reopening date as the filing date.

Transferred from Another District. (5) For cases transferred under Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1404(a). Do not use this for within district transfers or multidistrict litigation transfers.

Multidistrict Litigation. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1407. When this box is checked, do not check (5) above.

Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment. (7) Check this box for an appeal from a magistrate judge's decision.

Remanded from Appellate Court. (8) Check this box if remanded from Appellate Court.

VI. Related/Refiled Cases. This section of the JS 44 is used to reference related pending cases or re-filed cases. Insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judges name for such cases.

VII. Cause of Action. Report the civil statute directly related to the cause of action and give a brief description of the cause. **Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity.** Example: U.S. Civil Statute: 47 USC 553

Brief Description: Unauthorized reception of cable service

VIII. Requested in Complaint. Class Action. Place an "X" in this box if you are filing a class action under Rule 23, F.R.Cv.P.

Demand. In this space enter the dollar amount (in thousands of dollars) being demanded or indicate other demand such as a preliminary injunction.

Jury Demand. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not a jury is being demanded.

Date and Attorney Signature. Date and sign the civil cover sheet.